

Article of the Campgrounds



*and the
Redfield
United Pentecostal Church
Alton Jackson*

This article is in tribute to the founders of the Redfield United Pentecostal Church of the state of Arkansas. Also. of the Arkansas District Campground of the United Pentecostal Church International.

It is impossible to write about the ministry of the Redfield U.P.C., without referring to the Campground. Why might one make this statement; because the Redfield United Pentecostal Church, formerly Kearney United Pentecostal Church, is intertwined with the campgrounds. Many people are unaware that the land in which the Campground and old church are located was donated by brothers John and Sam Billingsley to have a church and a campground in their city. The Kearney United Pentecostal Church was always a part of the campgrounds.

Thank God for all our former pastors at the Kearney Church. They are the following Rev. L.B. Daniels from 1953-1954, Rev. Edward Ison in 1954, Rev. W.D. Pierce from 1954-1955, Rev. Howard Whittington from 1955-1956, Rev. R.C. Hall from 1956-1957, Rev. G.R. Huckaby from 1957-1967, Rev. H.E. Bates from 1967-1968. I remember when my dad Rev. Raymond Jackson was a pastor from 1968-1975. He was my first pastor at Kearney. Rev. Glenn L. Allsup was the pastor in 1975. He and his wife were tragically killed in a Car wreck. Rev. W.D. Hooper was pastor from 1975-1980. Rev. Percy Billingsley from 1981-1987. Our current Pastor is Rev. Phillip J. Hedden, who started in 1988, and has been the Pastor for over 30 years.

Often, it seemed like it didn't have its own identity; it was just the church located on the Campground. After many years, when the city limits of Redfield, extended past the church; Pastor Phillip Hedden decided the name needed to be changed, and the congregation approved it. Therefore, the church became the Redfield United Pentecostal Church. Thank you to the Billingsley family for the sacrifices your loved ones made. If it had not been for their donation, many people might not know the Lord today. Along with the land, which John and Sam Billingsley donated, Brother John and Sister Betty Billingsley also gave the blocks, which were going to be used to build their house, instead, constructing the church that they attended until their passing. In 2015, The Arkansas District celebrated 60 years of camp meetings held at the Arkansas District UPC International campgrounds.

According to Bro. Noah Coker, Brother W.D. Pierce's son-in-law, the first camp meeting took place in 1955. Brother W. D. Pierce, during this time, who was the pastor of Kearney United Pentecostal Church, used a team of mules to pull the logs that made the first brush arbor, and those logs were used to erect the first tabernacle. Interesting fact: Brother W. D, Pierce was the pastor in the city of White Hall from the time of my birth in 1962, through the first few years of my life. After many years of church repairs, Pastor Phillip Hedden and the

congregation decided to look for land to build a new church. We found the property, and the Redfield UPC purchased it and created a beautiful church. Our first service was in October of 2003 in the new church building.

The Arkansas District purchased our former church building. I was grateful for the church on the Campground, and the many years I attended there. I was excited when I heard that the Arkansas District was making the place where I received the Holy Ghost, into a prayer chapel for the district campground. However, it is not only a prayer chapel, but it is also a historic center for the Arkansas district. I want to say praise the Lord and thank the Arkansas UPCI for what it did in preserving a great place to worship God. I believe that Brother John and Sister Betty Billingsley would be thankful also.

The campground tabernacle has been the place that the Arkansas United Pentecostal Church can meet during the spring and summer for various conferences and camps. Many lives have changed by the anointed preaching and Holy Ghost outpouring that happens at Camp Meetings, Youth camps, Ladies' Conferences, and Men's Conferences. The speakers for these camps are lined up for months and sometimes even years in advance. Many people pray for these services a long time before they take place.

People volunteer their time and energy to help cook, clean, cut grass, work on buildings, and other things also to make a successful camp experience. Many people take vacations or days off from work to be a part of what God does in these services. Some people pour everything they have into youth camps and or camp meetings.

If you or a family member has ever helped on the Campground in any way, I, for one, want to say thank you. It would be impossible to name everyone who has helped throughout the years. However, God knows who you are, and the people you succeeded.

One cannot write about such a great place to worship God, without thinking about a minister, family, individual, song, or message that has touched or changed their lives. Of course, I was born a few years after the original tabernacle. The one that we now have is the only one that I remember. However, the things written below are some of the memories I have.

I remember sitting outside of the tabernacle on a fold-up metal chair, fighting horseflies and mosquitoes, while the doors opened. Before, the church was airconditioned; people were singing and worshipping God. They had pews on the inside of the tabernacle, but sometimes you would rip your clothes on a piece of the metal that held the wooden slatted benches together. Most of the time, we got there too late to get a seat inside anyway. Oh, but what preaching I heard as a child.

One of the first messages that I recall preached at the Campgrounds was by Brother O. R. Fauss. He made this comment in his sermon. "On your way to the rapture, don't look back."

Brother David Fauss's family sang a song many years later about, "Fire shut up in my bones, when I sing about JESUS." I could feel the anointing as they sang that song.

Brother Robert Bayer preached about Elijah, and his title was "And He Prayed Again," and he mentioned it's time to pray again."

Brother Floyd Odem preached a message entitled, "Why would anyone kill Jesus?"

He preached a while, and then he asked the question again. "Why would anyone kill

Brother Anthony Mangun spoke of, "When the Cedar Tree Falls so Does the Little Fir."

Referring to a song I once heard, "Whose side are you leaning on? I am leaning on the Lord's side."

Brother Darin Sargent, who was born with one arm preached on the subject, "I can't help myself I was born this way:' but his message wasn't about his congenital disability, his message was about he can't help but worship God.

Brother Billy Cole spoke about, "The Final Result of Hatred and Revenge." He talked about how much that Haman hated the Jewish people. He would die on the gallows that he had made for Mordecai. He was Queen Esther's uncle, and the queen was also a Jew. It was Haman's hatred that took his own life.

Brother Rex Johnson preached one time about, "If you build it, He Will Come," referring to if you build God's house. He will meet you there.

Brother Jason Huckaby spoke about, "Pardon Me, Martha, I Think I Will Worship," he talked about the difference between Mary and Martha. Martha was too busy to worship. Martha always wanted to impress the company with the house looking so neat and clean; but Mary worshipped Jesus when He came to their home.

Brother Robert Bayer preached a message entitled, "Come and Dine." For the record, I have never heard anybody that could quote scripture word for word like he could.

Brother Jerry Jones spoke of, "Living in a Real Reality." "Where are we living? Is it on the promises of God? The promise was what Abraham had. As he lived his life, it was always reality verses promise."

Brother Paul Mooney, while preaching about the ax head that floated, commented that "This ax head was different from that time forward because it had a story that could be told about it."

Once while Brother Mooney preached, he began to sing the song, "Jesus is the stone that was hewn out of the mountain tearing down the kingdoms of the world."

Brother Mooney also preached two great messages at the 60th Camp Meeting. Part of one was "You think you have control, you can't even control the weather," the other sermon was called "The God Swap Summit." "There is only one God, what are you going to swap him for?"

Brother Jerry Dean also preached one night of the sixtieth Camp Meeting; his title was, "It's Your Wish" How much of God do you want?" A little shot, a small glass, a mug, or a big gallon jug?

Sister Vesta Mangun preached a message that I heard on tape entitled, "I am content, but I am not satisfied."

Brother Kenneth Haney spoke of Jacob being, "The Heel Grabber." We have got to go after our blessing.

Someone spoke about, "The sand in my shoes." He talked about a man that walked for hundreds of miles. He didn't complain about how hot or cold it was, but in all his walking, the one thing that bothered him was the grains of sand that would get in his shoes. He said, "One of the humblest things to do is to wash someone else's feet."

Brother Marrell Cornwell spoke about, "The Beauty of the Ugly," speaking of the cross that Jesus died on for our sins.

Brother Cornwell and Brother Sysco teamed up and preached about, "Enough is enough." They talked about the devil and all his lying, conniving, deceiving and manipulating ways.

Brother James Lumpkin spoke of, "Not Losing Out with God Over a 10 Cent Kite," meaning do not let the little things that people do to you keep you from living for God.

Brother Dennis Anderson, at a men's conference. spoke about, "Being Defined by Our Days," to be better today than we were yesterday.

Brother Jerry Dean before preaching one night sang the song "Going to new Jerusalem." "New Jerusalem here I come, you can't take a train, and you can't take a bus, you have to have the Holy Ghost if you want to go with us, to the New Jerusalem."

Brother Calvin Jean spoke at a youth camp on the subject, "You Despise My Dance, Because You Can't Hear My Song." David prepared himself for the dance, with the music that he played "

Brother T. F. Tenney spoke about, "Seeing God through his Glory, with Glory, you kneel forward, with the power you fall back. He also said that hunger attracts God."

Brother Fred Foster spoke of, " Preaching the Bible," When you preach, have plenty of material, and remember that preparation is important!"

Brother Nathaniel Urshan commented, "Everywhere that you look; there is one God."

Brother Murray Ray spoke of, "The House of a Thousand Mercies" "You can't bankrupt a God like our God, He is full of mercy. Mercy is everywhere. The altar is covered with mercy."

Brother Mike Williams spoke about how, "You have a miracle in your life. If it's the Word of God, it's a miracle."

Brother Mark Foster preached about, "The greatest revelation is that Jesus, not the devil, died for me because Jesus loves me."

Brother Scott Graham, all four nights of a youth camp, preached about Sampson.

Brother Greg Allbritton spoke about, "When Calvary Doesn't Work anymore," "That only happens when I don't preach it as I should."

Brother Noah Coker preached a message about, "The Firebrands Plucked out of the Fire," referring to anybody that God saves,

Brother Robert Bayer would go up to the pulpit without a Bible in his hand, and sometimes he would ask this question, "If you brought your Bible to church, would you say praise the Lord." He would also ask, "If you did not bring your Bible to church, would you also say praise the Lord." Then he would say, "You need to bring your Bible to church and follow along with the preacher to make sure he is in the Book." Brother Bayer could quote scripture after scripture; I recall while he was preaching once he made this comment, "There are 1311 titles of God, but He only has one name! JESUS." He would also ask as he preached, "What's his name?" The congregation would respond "Jesus."

Once while Brother Bobby McCool Sr. was preaching to the young people, he asked them this question, "What is the root of all evil?" One of them said "Money." Brother McCool responded, "That is almost right; the love of money is the root of all evil" Sometimes it seems that God gives a minister a word just for you. Once when Brother Anthony Mangun had finished preaching and was praying around the altar, I told him how much I had enjoyed

his message. His response to me was, "There's a promise coming down your dusty road." He was unaware of the problems in my life at that time. Thank God for a minister with a word just for me.

Sister Anny Spence supervised the kitchen for twenty-five years, and after all her health issues, she is still faithful to attend every service that she can. She told me about the ladies before her, which were Sister Streeter and Sister Pat Huckaby. They all worked hard to serve in the kitchen, and many other ladies also helped. The kitchen is now supervised by Sister Ann Corbitt and all her volunteers.

All the camps are exceptional, but Thursday night of camp meeting has been extra special for many years because that is when we have our annual ministers' fellowship after service in the dining hall. The food and fellowship are always amazing.

One time at a youth camp, many of the young people brought non-spiritual records or tapes and other things that could lead them away from the spirit of God, and they tossed them into a big bonfire outside of the tabernacle.

What about Brother and Sister Freeman, Missionaries to South Africa? They would tell about all kinds of things from their journeys. She also wrote many books concerning what the Lord had done for them, while they travelled in the ministry.

There have been all kinds of music over the years. Like the bluegrass banjo picking, mandolin, fiddle playing of Brother and Sister Gray's family; their family sang many songs. The one that I remember most was called "The buttermilk bend baptism." For sixteen years they waited for the preacher that God had sent (that being a preacher that would baptize in Jesus name.)

What about the country sound of Brother and Sister McGruder?

Many others would sing songs that they had written themselves, such as Sister Mickey Mangun. If you have never heard her sing "Friends, Friends, Jesus and I are friends," you need to listen to that song.

Every year the children from Tupelo Children's Mansion bless us with their songs and stories about their lives as well as the different Bible college singers that come and worship with us.

What about the very talented family of Brother Marvin and Sister Norma Rutledge? Oh, how Brother Rutledge could lead a service, and his wife and daughters could sing and play musical instruments well. Sister Brenda, Sister Debbie, Sister Joy, all married preachers who

are: Brother Gary Casteel, Brother Richard Price, and Brother Russell Hamby. All are great men of God in their own right. You also can't leave out Brother and Sister Rutledge's son, the late Brother Ren Rutledge who also was musically inclined, wrote many songs, and pastored while on this earth.

Just think of the many congregational song leaders that would sing songs and usher us into worship, such as Brother Rick Lumpkins. I remember him leading songs during a crusaders camp, in which over forty children received the Holy Ghost.

What about the numerous youth choirs through the years? Young people would stand wall to wall across the front of the tabernacle. The many choir leaders through the years were amazing. It seems like we have a quartet of men every year, and don't forget about the praise team that leads us into the spirit of worship. It is always awesome!

I remember while someone preached during a youth camp, a person was dressed in a red suit, carrying a pitchfork in his hand (imitating the devil), and a bunch of young people chased him out of the tabernacle. His testimony later was "That the young people hate the devil because they liked to have killed me!"

Through the years, many people have received: their calling to preach, a word of encouragement, a lifetime friend, a spouse.

Healing for their body or spirit, or maybe other things, while in service or while staying on the Campground.

When I was in my late teens, I had a wart on my thumb that would not go away; it hurt and looked terrible. One night at camp, the sick or people with needs were asked to have a minister to pray for their needs. I went up to a heavy-set preacher that I did not know, and I asked for prayer. After he prayed for me, I went home, and for days I would wash my hands without looking at them. One day I looked at my hand, and there was no wart, and no pain. Thank you, Jesus!

Some of my favorite preachers have preached at the campgrounds; men such as

Brother Marrell Cornwell, Brother T. F. Tenney, Brother Crawford Coon, Brother Paul Mooney, Brother Wayne Huntley, Brother Scott Graham, and many others. One can't help but to want to give, or be moved, or be excited about the burdens that our brothers and sisters have for the various departments of the Arkansas District of the United Pentecostal Church International. Regardless of whoever the leaders are of each department, it always seems that the burden to reach people with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ is vital. To help take care of our Campground is also of great necessity.

While under the leadership of Brother James Lumpkin, it seemed that we always would finish the last night of camp meeting with the song, "I'll See you in the Rapture some Sweet Day."

When hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana in the year 2005, some of the refugees (Louisianans) had to stay on the Campground, Our church had services inside the tabernacle, to help accommodate the people that were staying there. My Pastor Phillip Hedden preached, and what a time to remember! We had Sunday school in the tabernacle, and our church people stayed up for hours trying to accommodate everyone. Superintendent Brother B. J, Thomas and camp coordinator Brother Rick Lumpkins were very instrumental in helping set up the Campground to help all the people in need.

There are many memories while our church was on the campgrounds. Some good memories and others not so good. For years, we did not have a restroom in our church; we used the campground facilities during this time. Brother W.D. Hooper made many improvements to the church building while he was pastor, including restrooms and Sunday school rooms.

Before the restrooms were put in, there was no carpet on the floor.

Also, at the back of the church, there was a wood-burning stove. At the front of the church on the platform area, there was what I call a Grand Piano; at least it was the grandest piano that I have ever seen. For years, our church did not have a fellowship hall, but under the leadership of Pastor Percy Billingsley, Brother Orville Corbitt, and Roger Corbitt, along with others helping, we built one. Just a reminder that what is now the prayer chapel and historical information center used to be the Redfield UPC Fellowship Hall.

We are glad that our church was established in 1953 by Reverend L.B. Daniels, and in the spring of 1954, the congregation moved into the church building. The secret of moving forward is never to forget the beginning.

Our church has been a part of the United Pentecostal Church International for many years. In this organization, there are several different sections in the Arkansas District. It just so happens that our church has been part of Section two for many years. We have been blessed with fellowship at youth rallies and other meetings, with churches and their pastors from Sheridan to Eudora. What great ministers, pastors, and friends that we have known throughout the years.

Our church was always blessed to have the caretakers of the Campground visit our church during the camp season. Many of them attended our church for a long period of time. We

also have visitors that come to the camp meeting or youth camps early. It is always a blessing to our people, to see our brothers and sisters in the Lord visit our church services. Our church has always been supportive of many missionaries and evangelists. What a blessing they are to us also.

Let us not forget about Brother Forest Hassle, who served as Secretary, who always seemed to have a smile on his face. Also, Brother Aubrey Jayroe served with three previous superintendents as district secretary, a man of excellent knowledge of the laws of the land, and even a remarkable ability to keep people's attention with a story.

What about all the great Superintendents of the Arkansas District since the Campground came to Redfield? The first two that I can remember just a little were the Rev. O.C. Cannon, and Rev. R.N. Bennett. I was young under their leadership. After them came Rev. James Lumpkin, a very likable and kind man, a leader to aspire to be. He could take up an offering and make you want to give more than what you could. He also had a unique way to keep unity among the brethren. Under his leadership and friendship came our next Arkansas District Superintendent Brother B.J. Thomas, a man of great concern, to see the ministry of the District of Arkansas go forward. He is a man of tremendous vision. After him came Brother Dennis Anderson who is a man with a very likeable spirit and great leadership capability. He worked diligently to upgrade and preserve the campgrounds with much thought and budgeting balancing.

Rev. Timothy Gaddy is now the Superintendent and he is a man of a kind spirit with the same vision as his predecessors, to see the kingdom of God go forward. I trust that you agree with me that we have been blessed with outstanding leadership in Arkansas. Again, I say that we have been blessed with great leaders in the state of Arkansas.

After writing this book, I hope I have shown great respect to:

The ministry of The Redfield United Pentecostal Church,
The Ministry of The Arkansas District of the United Pentecostal Church, Camp meeting and youth camp speakers, The word of God,
Saints of the past, present and even the future.

Yes, there will be a church in Redfield when Jesus comes back!

Presented by Brother Alton Jackson to the Arkansas United Pentecostal Church International in 2023.



*A Special Thanks to
Brother John and Sister Betty Billingsley*

*If it had not been for this couple
desiring a church in their local
community, The Redfield Church
might not exist and the Campgrounds
may not be in its current location. The
lives that have been impacted in these
buildings would not have been possible
without this couple.*